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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001276

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/SE, EB/ESC/ESP AND S/CT; GENERAL COUNSEL (DAVID AUFHAUSER) AND TASK FORCE ON TERRORIST FINANCING; TREASURY FOR OFFICE OF U/S FOR ENFORCEMENT (MICHAEL LEARY); OFFICE OF FOREIGN ASSETS CONTROL (MUNRO); OFFICE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (SCHROEDER); DOJ FOR CRIMINAL DIVISION/SECTION ON ASSET FORFEITURE (SUZANNE HAYDEN)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/25/2006

TAGS: [CVIS](#) [EFIN](#) [ETTC](#) [PTER](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TERRORIST FINANCE: DISCUSSIONS OF CHECHEN AND OTHER DESIGNATIONS

REF: A. (A) SECSTATE 48257

[B](#). (B) ANKARA 1158

[C](#). (C) ANKARA 126

(U) Classified by Economic Counselor Scot Marciel for reasons 1.5 (b), (d).

[1](#). (S) Summary: On February 25, we met with Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Deputy Director General for Research and Intelligence Hakan Okcal and his associate Firat Sunel to discuss past, recent and upcoming US/UN designations of terrorist financiers. We noted that the US designation of three Chechen groups (SECSTATE 48257) is scheduled for February 28, and stressed the importance of the GOT designating these groups. Okcal said the GOT would designate them as soon as possible after a formal UN designation. End Summary.

[2](#). (S) We began by asking Okcal about follow up GOT action to the USG recommendation made in the December 2002 visit of our C/T finance experts (ref C). Okcal said the MFA has recently proposed an amendment to existing counterterrorist legislation, aimed at expediting the GOT's currently cumbersome process of terrorist financier designations. (We have not seen the proposed amendment but will follow up septel.) The MFA had not yet received comments from other agencies, though Okcal understands informally that MASAK (Financial Crimes Investigation Board) and the Finance Ministry will support it. At present, each designation requires a Council of Ministers decree, meaning each minister must approve. The MFA is preparing the latest Cabinet decree, and Okcal stated that it would include some 20 names, including groups/individuals recently designated by the USG (Lashkar i Jhangvi, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, and Ansar al-Islam). However, the Cabinet has not issued a decree for designating terrorist financiers since before the AK Party took power in November. Okcal commented that this would be the first C/T finance decree for the AK Government.

Chechen Designations

[3](#). (S) We shared with Okcal information in ref A previously passed to MFA (ref B). Okcal acknowledged that Turkey is a focal point for Chechen support and contains a significant Chechen diaspora. He pointed out that some politicians, including Deputy PM Abdullatif Sener, were of Caucasian or Chechen descent. He also noted the importance of not designating "the whole nation" (referring to Chechnya) a terrorist group (we pointed out that Chechen separatist leader Aslan Maskhadov was not included in the designation). Okcal, however, emphasized that the GOT's secular establishment had every intention of freezing funding of all UN-designated terrorist groups, including these Chechen groups. He said that if the UN designation immediately followed the US designation on February 28, he would undertake to include the Chechens in the latest Cabinet decree, which the MFA was planning to circulate interagency this coming weekend.

ETIM

[4](#). (S) We also queried whether the GOT had seized any assets in Turkey belonging to the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a group that was designated by the UN in September [2002](#). Okcal said ETIM was designated in the GOT's last Cabinet decree of October 2002. As for ETIM asset seizure,

"Nothing has been reported to us," Okcal said, adding that the Chinese Embassy has been vocal about pushing the GOT but had not provided any specific intel.

Yasin al-Kadi

15. (S) Finally, Okcal said that al-Qaida financier Yasin al-Kadi had lost his appeal in Turkey. The appellate court decision noted that any name designated by the UN would be designated in Turkey, "end of story." Okcal said that this decision establishes a useful judicial precedent for future cases.

16. (S) Comment: We will work closely with USUN later this week to get an assessment of when exactly the UN will move forward with Chechen designation. In addition, we will continue to monitor progress on their draft Cabinet decree, including the Chechen groups.
PEARSON